Paper V.—THE ARCHIVES OF CANADA.

By Dr. W. J. ANDERSON, President.

A good deal of interest has been shewn of late on this subject, and some action taken to induce the Government of the Dominion to appoint a Record Commission; but as the part which the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec has always taken in connection with our Archives is not generally known, I have thought well to give a statement, so far as the records of the Society which have escaped the *fires* will enable me.

The charter states that one of the chief objects for which the Society was established was the prosecution of researches into the early history of Canada, and the recovering, procuring and publishing of interesting documents and useful information in connection with the natural, civil, and literary history of British North America. That such was the object of the Government is evidenced by the numerous special grants made to the Society, and which originally formed the basis of the "Historical Document Fund."

The first reference that I can find is in the Report of the Council for 1833, as follows:—"The liberal vote of £200, appropriated the year before last by the House of Assembly, for the purpose of aiding the Society in the research after rare and interesting documents connected with the history of the Canadas, still remains in the bank, at the disposal of the president and committee of Historical Documents, with the exception of about £40, which has been placed in the hands of our zealous and faithful corresponding member, Mr. Gould, of London, to meet any incidental expenses which he may be requested to incur in promoting the objects of the Society."

The next allusion is in the Report for 1837:—"An important addition *to the deposit formerly entrusted to us by*

Lord Aylmer, for the benefit of the public, has been contributed by the *Record Commission*, consisting of thirteen folio volumes and four octavo of that valuable publication." Lord Aylmer succeeded Sir James Kempt, in 1831, as patron of the Society, and perhaps did even more than its first patron, Lord Dalhousie, to advance its interests, by placing in its custody the documents here referred to. The Report for 1837 also says that the efforts of the Historical Document Committee had only been attended with partial success:—"Unforeseen difficulties have hitherto baffled its efforts to obtain information in England, though it has been led to hope that these difficulties may at length be surmounted. Its attempts to obtain information from the *Bureau de la Marine*, in France, have been equally unsuccessful; and the last accounts seem to indicate that the Records from which this information was expected were destroyed in the Revolution of 1789 and '91." The committee, however, had in the press a document communicated by Colonel Christie, illustrating the history of the Province from 1749 to 1760. And it ought to be specially noted that, in addition to other very liberal offers, "another donation of highly interesting works" was made by the Right Honorable Sir Charles Grey.

By the Report for 1833, we learn that the Rev. Mr. Holmes had transmitted from Paris "a large addition of scarce books, both printed and in manuscript." Those printed related to the discovery of the continent, the first colonies, and voyages; and also supplied a want by furnishing the history of Canada from 1750 to 1779. The manuscripts related to the same periods.

In the Report for 1839 the Council congratulates the Society, among other things, on the additions made to the Library "by the splendid donation of the Earl of Durham and the books procured for illustrating the history of the country." The donation was worthy of this munificent patron of the Society, and consisted of *ninety-four* volumes

of the finest and rarest editions of the Greek and Roman classics. There were also procured in London, through the agency of the Honorable A. W. Cochrane, "rare and unique maps and atlases, books of travels, and voyages to America; descriptions of the manners of the nations; the proceedings, wars, and sufferings of the first colonies; and histories of various subsequent periods." The *Councillor Macedo*, Secretary of the Royal Academy of Lisbon, presented a publication of his own, on the navigation of the Atlantic ocean at remote periods. And again, the *Record Commission* of Great Britain and Ireland sent a large contribution of their publications. The Report concludes its reference to the Historical Document Committee, as follows:—"The publication of important historical documents has been advantageously continued. By the influence and public spirit of His Excellency the Earl of Durham, some valuable manuscripts have been procured for us from Versailles, which the committee on that subject had in vain striven to obtain through any other channel. The greatest part of them have been printed, and are now ready for distribution. They contain important information relating to the statistics and events of the Province in former periods. The others remain in the Society's archives for future disposal." Four hundred copies of some of the valuable manuscripts transmitted from Paris in the previous year were also printed.

In November, 1839, the Society, by request of the Legislative Assembly, conveyed by its clerk, W. B. Lindsay, Esq., became custodians of the specimens of Natural History belonging to the Province, and was thus enabled to restore and preserve a very valuable collection from the destruction into which it was rapidly falling. The Report for 1840 informs us:—"The Committee on Historical Documents has prepared a second small volume, which is now printed and ready for distribution. It consists of manuscripts presented to the Society by the Earl of Durham and the Rev. Mr. Holmes. They are eight in number, and contain new

and interesting information on the state of Canada under the French Government, which will serve to fill some *lacunæ* in the early history of the Western Provinces.

In 1843 the Council reports, that, as there still remained a balance of the £200 voted by the Legislature in 1832, it had applied a portion of it to reprinting the journals of Jacques Cartier, which had long been out of print, and of which few copies were extant, even in the public libraries of France. The reprint was from a copy obtained by the Society of a manuscript in the Royal Library at Paris, supposed to be a transcript of the original journal of Jacques Cartier himself. It also published a tract relating to the first discoveries on the shores of Canada, from Hakluyt's collection, where alone it was known to be found. The Council also received from a gentleman in Paris a communication, proposing to obtain for the Society copies of documents relating to the early history of Canada, both before and after the period comprised in the works of *Charlevoix*, which are to be found in the archives of the *Bureau de la Marine* and the *Ministère de la Guerre.* Former attempts to obtain access to these having failed, the Council was glad to avail itself of this opportunity, and entered into a correspondence to procure an analysis of the manuscripts and the probable cost of transcribing them, in the hope that the Legislature would be again induced to grant its aid.

The Report of the year 1844 records :—" The Historical Committee have published a pamphlet, being the third of the kind, bearing on the early history of Canada. It comprises the three voyages of *Jacques Cartier*, *Le Routier de Jean Alphonse*, *Voyage du Sieur Roberval*, and *Lettres de Jacques Noël*, with appendices." Copies were sent to the public authorities within the Provinces, and to corresponding literary and scientific associations beyond. The Council also reported that the Historical Document Fund being exhausted, it applied to the Legislature for a new grant, but did not

obtain it, owing to the untimely closing of the session; consequently, it was unable to make arrangements with M. Margry, the gentleman referred to in a previous report.

In the Report for 1845 the Council states that it had renewed its application for a grant to the Legislature, and hoped to be successful, and refers encouragingly to what had been done by the "Historical Society of New York," which, partly by State aid and partly by their own resources, had been enabled to send an agent to Europe, who had been allowed to transcribe from the archives in Paris many volumes illustrating the early history of Canada. From want of funds the Council had not yet been able to employ M. Margry; but he had transmitted a copy of an ancient and interesting plan of Montreal, made in 1729, by *M. Chaussegros de Léry.*

The Report of 1846 says that the Council had laid before the Government an estimate for £1,000, which they proposed to expend in connection with the Historical Document Committee; but the Legislature only granted £200. Finding this sum totally inadequate to carry out its proposed plans, the Council decided to transcribe from the Broadhead collection at Albany; and having obtained permission from the State authorities, by the kind intervention of Mr. Barclay, the British consul, it made a contract with Mr. Félix Glackemeyer to proceed to Albany; and by the end of November, 1845, that gentleman had forwarded to Quebec complete copies of the correspondence between the sovereign and minister of France and the colonial authorities, and also of other interesting public documents, from 1631 to 1684. Mr. Glackemeyer did not expect to complete his work for six months more.

In 1847 we have a most satisfactory account. The Executive had, in compliance with an address of the Legislative Assembly, advanced to the Society £300 to aid in the completion of the service it had so well begun; and

during the ensuing summer Mr. Glackemeyer had furnished *seventeen* folio volumes in manuscript, being copies and extracts from those of Mr. Broadhead, procured by him in Paris and London.

The Society found it expedient to send to Albany the Hon. A. W. Cochrane, a member of the Historical Document Committee, who examined thirty-eight volumes, and marked the portions to be copied. Since then it had received 1,220 pages of manuscript extracted from twenty-six volumes, bringing down the history to 1636. Mr. Glackemeyer hoped, with the aid of his assistant, to have the work completed in a few weeks. The Council acknowledges the courtesy and facilities offered by the State authorities of New York, and its indebtedness to Messrs. *Cochrane* and *Faribault.*

In 1852 the Council availed themselves of M. Faribault's visit to Europe to open communication with several learned societies. The Historical Document Fund was now reduced to £115 4s. 1d.

In 1854 we find :—"The Council have learnt, with the greatest satisfaction, that no less than 600 pages of manuscript documents have lately been received from Paris, containing the official correspondence which took place between the Colonial Government and the Intendants of Canada and the Mother-country, during the period when the colony was under the French dominion. These documents were obtained from the different public archives in Paris by *M. Faribault*, during his mission to Europe in 1851-2. They are a continuation of another series of documents of the same nature, copies of which were obtained in 1845 from the collections made in Paris by Mr. Broadhead, an American agent, bound up in seventeen volumes, and are now on the shelves of our Library. The newly-acquired documents from Paris, now being bound, will form *eleven* large folio volumes ; *and should the Legislature permit these also to be deposited in*

the custody of the Society, they will present a splendid and unique collection of twenty-eight volumes, replete with the most valuable information on the early colonization of the country, the history of the wars with the aborigines, and numerous thrilling events, affording an inexhaustible source of information to the future historian of Canada."

The Council recommended that judicious selections should be made, and a volume printed under the direction of the Society.

Early in the winter of that year, the Society, whose rooms were in the old Parliament buildings, sustained an inestimable loss when the building was consumed by fire. The estimated loss in the Museum and Library was £1,400. Many of the articles and books, being unique, could never be replaced; but, through the great exertions of some members of the Society, almost the whole of the manuscripts were saved.

After this period the Legislature made no special grants to the Historical Document Fund, but increased the annual grant from £50 to £250; and it would appear that the Historical Document Fund, which had been reduced in 1852 to £115 4s. 1d., now stood at £121 8s. 7d.

At the close of the year 1862, the Society, whose Library and Museum had been removed to the rooms in John street, sustained another great loss from fire; but again the manuscripts were preserved, and the Council, in their next year's Report, urged the continued publication, under its control, but on the advice of a sub-committee, who should make the selections. The Historical Document Fund is stated in the general account to be £209 17s. 0d.

I must now turn to Nova Scotia. As early as 1857, the Honorable Joseph Howe, who was always foremost to advance literary research in his native Province, carried a

resolution in the Legislative Assembly to cause the ancient records and documents, illustrative of the history and progress of society in that Province, "to be examined, preserved, and arranged, either for reference or publication," as the Legislature might afterwards determine. By another resolution, in 1859, the Lieutenant-Governor was authorized to procure from the "State-paper office, in England, copies of documents necessary to complete the fyles. And in 1859, he was requested to procure from the Government of Canada, from its archives, copies of papers relating to the early history of Canada.

Dr. Thomas B. Akins was fortunately selected as the paid "Commissioner of Records, and Messrs. S. L. Shannon, J. Bourinot, and A. G. Archibald, a joint committee of the Legislative Council and Assembly to advise with him." The proceedings of Dr. Akins were judicious and successful; and when I visited Halifax, in 1864, I had an opportunity of seeing the result of his labors up to that date, which I found so interesting and important that I felt it my duty, on my return to Quebec, to report to the Council what I had seen; but nothing was done till the 10th January, 1866, when the Librarian, Mr. LeMoine, read in his official report, at the annual meeting:—"The undersigned begs to call the attention of the Society to the fact that several important documents for the history of Canada, according to the statement of Dr. Anderson, exist in the archives at Halifax." At a subsequent meeting of the Council the necessary sum was voted to enable me to procure copies of the papers I might think most suitable. I at once entered into correspondence with the Hon. A. G. Archibald and Chief-Justice Sir Wm. Young, who both shewed readiness to meet my views; and after communication with Dr. Akins, I was informed by Mr. Archibald that if the Society could wait till the end of the year it would be unnecessary for it to incur any expense, as Dr. Akins had in the press, under the authority

of the Nova-Scotia Government, a volume which would contain all the papers I wished, and that he would request Dr. Akins to forward us the work when published. In due time the promised volume came, and proved to be a most careful selection from 200 volumes, which Dr. Akins had arranged and caused to be bound. Its importance may be estimated from the fact that it contained all the missing documents in connection with the most lamentable epoch in the history of Nova Scotia, the deportation of the Acadians,—documents which the Nova-Scotian historian, Halliburton, failing to find among the archives, after a careful search, had concluded *destroyed*, because the Government *were ashamed*, as they well might, of the whole transaction. These documents, however, go to shew that, however much humanity may regret so extreme a measure, there really was no alternative left unless Britain decided to abandon the country to the Acadians.

I must acknowledge that since I have had the pleasure to correspond with Dr. Akins, I have received from him very valuable information in connection with my own historical pursuits, and that the Society is indirectly indebted to his suggestion for the interesting "*Journal of the Siege*," by General Murray, which I had the good fortune to procure from the Record-office at London, without any cost to the Society, through the courtesy of Sir Thomas Hardy and Mr. Kingston, and the kind agency of my friend Mr. Ralph Heap.

I now return to Quebec and our Society. Though no specific grant had been made to the "Historical Document Fund" by the Legislature since its vote of £300 in 1847, still, the Society justly thought that the increase of the annual vote from £50 to £250 was intended to subserve the same object; and, accordingly, it continued the publication of those documents which the Historical Committee thought most desirable, and was thus enabled to place before the public, in 1866, a small volume containing seven original and

independent papers, bearing on Wolfe's expedition in 1759, operations in 1760, and the American invasion of 1775, which have proved of such interest to the antiquarian and historian, that they have, either individually or as a volume, been eagerly sought after by societies and writers of note on this continent and in Europe.

The next circumstance, and one which gave an important impetus to the subject, was the reading of a paper, before the Society, on "Archives," by Dr. Miles, of the Education Department. After the publication of this paper in our "Transactions," I forwarded a copy to my friend the Honble. Joseph Howe, and pressed upon him the appointment of a commission for Canada similar to what he had been instrumental in establishing in Nova Scotia. As it is in reference to a public matter, and expresses the views of a statesman very experienced in such matters, I shall take the liberty of giving an extract from his letter:

"The Dominion has lasted but four years. Its records are so few and recent that their preservation would hardly afford work for a commission. The muniments of the old Provinces of Ontario and Quebec, I have no doubt, are in a bad state enough. But these are being handed over to each Province, and will be hereafter in the care and disposition of the Local Governments. We sent recently to Quebec ten or a dozen boxes containing some tons of old papers. You had better ascertain from Mr. Chauveau if it is intended to do anything with them."

Though this communication was rather discouraging, I certainly should have adopted its suggestion, and sought an interview with Mr. Chauveau; but, unhappily, at its date, 17th Dec., 1870, Mr. Chauveau was in deep family affliction, and I could not justify myself were I to intrude upon him. Accordingly, I took no further step at that time. Dr. Miles, however, did not rest with the mere reading and printing of his paper, but followed it by the drawing-up of a petition

to the Legislature, in which all the advantages of the appointing a commission were fully disclosed. The Doctor took much trouble in procuring signatures in Quebec, Montreal, and elsewhere. He then proceeded to Ottawa, and secured the aid of Sir Alexander T. Galt, who entered, as anybody who knows him would expect, very warmly into the movement, and, himself, submitted it in a very able speech to the House of Commons, by whom it was referred to the Library Committee, who reported it favorably; but, as it involved a money vote, recommended that the matter should be left in the hands of some member of the Government, and, unfortunately, named Mr. Dunkin, who was peculiarly fitted by his literary tastes and the energy which he always brought to bear on anything he undertook, but who, unfortunately, at that time, was overwhelmed with the labours of the census, and who shortly afterwards retired from office to the bench. It is not known, but it is very probable that nothing has been done since it was referred to Mr. Dunkin.

To shew the importance attached to our archives by foreign historians, I may mention that in January, 1870, I received a letter from Mr. Parkman, who, though a foreigner, is really entitled to be considered one of the first of Canadian historians. I give an extract from this letter:

"Now, there are among your collections the four remaining volumes of the manuscripts collected by *M. Papineau*. The first of these four volumes contains the "*Relation de ce qui s'est passé en Canada au sujet de la guerre tant des Anglais que des Iroquois, depuis l'année* 1682." This seems to be an important document. Is there any prospect of its speedy publication? If not, can I be allowed to have it copied? These four volumes formed a part of the *Papineau* collection, nine or ten volumes in all, of which all the others were burned in the fire of 1849. Does any record remain of the contents of the five or six volumes destroyed? If so, the lost papers could be recopied in France, if Prussian bombs spare the archives. Will you please inform me if any such record is known to exist?"

Failing to get the desired information in Quebec, at the suggestion of a gentleman here, to whom I had applied, I addressed *M. Papineau himself*, and received the following most courteous reply:

"MONTREAL, 21st Feby, 1871.

"*W. J. Anderson, Esq.*—DEAR SIR,—I had the pleasure of receiving, yesterday, your letter dated 18th inst., with your invoice of a copy of the last year's *Transactions* of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, for both of which I return my most sincere thanks.

"I regret much that it is not likely that it may be in my power to help you in the recovery of the manuscripts which the Society lost by fire in 1849. The original, or rather first copies from Paris, had been received by the Parliamentary Library. Were these deposited in your custody, or only copies? The learned librarians at Ottawa are the last source of information to obtain the dates and titles of all that had been received. I am here during the winter months without my library, which remains in my summer residence, *Monte-Bello*, where I usually return with the opening of the navigation—end of April. Very likely the titles and dates of those several writings are printed in the general catalogue of the Parliamentary Library, and the names of the gentlemen by whom I had them copied. These volumes are on the shelves of my library, as they are on yours, but cannot *seriatim* be absorbed in my poor old memory. If, after I shall have reached my home, it were in my power to scrape out of my notes any particulars that could in any way help you as to the best means of reaching the French colonial archives, to have the missing manuscripts copied anew, be assured that I shall not fail to regard it as both a duty and a pleasure to impart the information to you. I remain very respectfully, "J. PAPINEAU."

Having received no further communication from this great and good man, I conclude that he had failed to find anything among his notes that would serve us. Death has completely closed this source of information. I may say that the *Papineau* collection formed part of the "deposit" intrusted to us by Lord Aylmer, and that six out of the ten volumes were consumed by the fire of 1849. I have the pleasure to say

that within the past few weeks the Society was able to forward to Mr. Parkman a printed copy of the manuscript which he had sought, and trust that during the present year one or more of the remaining volumes will be added to our publications.

Mr. Parkman having had occasion, during the past summer, to visit Quebec, for the purpose of consulting some documents in possession of the Laval University, Mr. LeMoine (then President of our Society) and myself availed ourselves of the opportunity, and had conversation with him on the subject of our archives. On his way home, he had the kindness to address to Mr. LeMoine, from Portland, a letter which the Society immediately adopted, as shewing a most intimate acquaintance with the subject in every aspect; and a numerously-attended meeting, on the 11th of October last, passed unanimously the following resolution :

"That the *Literary and Historical Society* of Quebec has noticed with much satisfaction the action taken by the Dominion Parliament, at the instance of Sir A. T. Galt, K.C.B., on the petition presented by the Society and others, praying that measures be adopted to preserve the historical and public archives of the Dominion, by the creation of an office of Public Records; and this Society earnestly hopes that the deep interest recently manifested for the cause of Canadian history by the eminent historian Francis Parkman, as evidenced in his eloquent letter, addressed to the President of this institution, will tend to promote such a useful and national project as the one herein alluded to. That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Hon. C. Dunkin, to whose department this subject was referred by a Committee of the House of Commons."

The interest which Mr. Parkman has shewn did not rest here; for, in reply to a letter lately addressed to him by M. Barthe, of Quebec, he gives such valuable information that I take the liberty of publishing it :

"The two volumes of Canadian documents possessed by the *Literary and Historical Society of Quebec* are two of the ten volumes collected by

M. Papineau. Of these, six were destroyed in the burning of the Parliament House. M. Papineau retained no list of their contents, which, judging from those remaining, were very valuable. They are not included in any other collection in this country, unless brought over by individuals for private purposes, which is not probable.

"M. Margry's list, which I have seen, is an excellent guide, *so far as it goes*, and all the papers named by it ought to be secured without delay; *but it is not complete.* M. Margry omitted many important papers, because they related to subjects on which he himself was making collections. I have seen his documents, which are very voluminous and important. The only way to supply the deficiency is to make a systematic search in the *Archives de la Marine, Archives de la Guerre, Ecole de Chartres, Dépôt des Cartes de la Marine* (whose documents are also kept), and other great repositories, beginning with the year 1663 and ending with the cession.

"The great collection of L'Abbé Faillon, Séminaire de St. Sulpice, Paris, is extremely rich; and perhaps access might be had to it.

"I am unable to give lists of deficient documents, though it is certain that many such exist. A selection from Faillon's papers would certainly be of the greatest value; and those named by M. Margry (in his list at Ottawa) should be recovered before another revolution at Paris. These, with the joint lists of the documents at Ottawa and Albany as a guide, should be made through the archives to complete the collection and supply its vacancies.

"Possibly there may be in the *State House* at Boston a few papers on Acadia, not to be found at Ottawa. I have, myself, a large collection on Acadia, which I shall be happy to submit to examination."

I have received from Mr. Thos. H. Wynne, of Richmond, Virginia, a letter under date of 7th Feby. last, in which he incidentally mentions:—"I enclose a copy of a bill which I introduced in this House (the Senate), and which has passed both Houses without amendment. An index similar to the *Calendar of State Papers*, issued from the Public

Record Office of Great Britain, I shall send your Society a copy of as soon as printed. Up to 1865 these papers were much larger in bulk than they now are, and, of course, more valuable; but when the Federal soldiers occupied our capital buildings at the capture of Richmond, the autograph and curiosity-hunters revelled in the spoils. We hope, however, to present a goodly treat in what we have left."

I annex the bill, as its provisions seem quite applicable to the Dominion. I am far from underrating the foreign sources referred to; but I am stongly under the impression that our first efforts should be directed to making arrangements for collecting together, assorting, and indexing the very valuable documents which we already possess, but which are unavailable, from being scattered from one end of the Dominion to the other. I find, from conversations I have had with several influential French Canadians, that though there is undoubtedly some difference of opinion as to the best mode of procedure, there is perfect unanimity as to the desirability of some steps being taken, if only to preserve from further decay muniments which have been impaired in value and damaged by time and neglect. I trust, then, that a united effort will be made at the next session of the Dominion Legislature. In the meantime, I submit this statement, as few seem to be aware how much has been done in the past in this direction.

QUEBEC, *February* 14*th*, 1872.

SENATE BILL No. 8.

A BILL *to Secure the Preservation of Historical Papers in the Capitol Building.*

Whereas there are in the stock-rooms and lofts of the State library large numbers of manuscripts and other documents relating to the history of Virginia, which have been already greatly impaired in value and damaged by time, neglect, and spoliation:

1. Be it enacted by the general assembly, That Dr. William P. Palmer be and he is hereby appointed to take charge of the manuscripts in the State library, under the direction of the librarian; to assort, index, and prepare the same for preservation in such form as to them may seem best, with authority to publish such of the same as the executive committee of the Virginia Historical Society may select, in such form as may be suitable, from copies taken by them, or under their direction.

2. That, for the purposes of this act, a sum not exceeding one thousand dollars is hereby appropriated out of any money in the treasury, not otherwise appropriated; and the auditor of public accounts is hereby authorized to issue his warrant upon the treasurer for the sum thus appropriated, upon the certificate of the State Librarian, countersigned by the Governor.

3. This act shall be in force from its passage.